



## Jokoch



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### Chapter 1 by Joshua T

~Prologue~

A dark, midnight blue figure flew across the dark, night sky, his cloak fluttering behind him. A few miles away, he spotted a clearing in the forest; it seemed to be a perfect circle. He alighted softly on the ground, a soft breeze making the grass in the clearing to sway ever so slightly.

/Have you made your decision?/ A voice spoke in his mind.

/Yes./ He replied. /I will make the exchange. You give us Jade, I'll come peacefully./

The mysterious voice seemed to give an approving grunt. Suddenly, a swirling vortex of black appeared; it seemed to warp the night. With a flash of light, a woman's body fell out of it, limp and seemingly lifeless.

/What?! You said she'd be safe!/ The man implored accusingly.

/Well least I'd say she's safe, relatively at. Anyway, now you must keep up your end of the deal./

The man sighed. Of course, he didn't expect anything different from "Fake Onyx," as he liked to call him.

/Okay, fine./ He came forward, expecting the vortex to let him jump in, but it suddenly

dissipated.

/Now!/?

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A spear of thought drove into his mind. The man had been so helpful (and quite destructive) telepaths, but they were a... Immediately, Jokoch knew he could not win this fight, and he knew that he couldn't fight back.

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Before he blacked out, he let out a blast of power brighter than the sun. It permeated through the clearing, then it faded as the man collapsed.

~~Beginning of Chapter One~~

Jokoch woke up from his short, restless sleep, his bruises aching because of yesterday's beating from Parilon. Of course, he had gotten used to the pain, after fifteen years of continually suffering the same, constant pain.

He got out of his humble bed, made sure to check over his chemistry homework before he packed up his backpack, then, carrying his heavy backpack with him, left his room.

## Chapter 2 by Jessica Kruger



He hurried to the bus stop and slowed as he neared. Everyone was crowded around something and he tried to see, but as soon as he got close, he wished he hadn't. The crowd parted and Parilon, the meanest to him of all the school kids, but by far not the meanest out of everyone, stood in the middle with a brand new, which was topped by the cruel Malcil, his caretaker, sharpened knife drawn.

He smiled evilly as the crowd circled around Parilon and Jokoch to block his escape, the bus stop sign awkwardly standing in the middle. Parilon started to walk toward him and the crowd tightened around them. Jokoch backed up but soon hit the edge of the crowd, who for once, laid hands on him as they pushed him into Parilon's reach.

He grabbed Jokoch who tried to struggle away but a slash to the face stopped him as he yelled in pain and his hands shoot up to his cheek. Jokoch could feel the blood around his fingers as Parilon hung him on the bus stop sign in the middle of his underwear. Parilon was tall enough that he was a head taller than Jokoch while he was hanging on the sign.

/They won't kill me,/ he thought, /they enjoy beating me too much./ The thought didn't comfort him that much. Parilon ripped Jokoch's shirt off and threw it on the ground, spitting on it.

Parilon did the same with Jokoch's pants and backpack. saving that such a foul creature such as

he didn't deserve such things. Jokoch hung there, shivering from the cold and the fear. Everyone was laughing at him and teasing him.

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Parilon slashed out and sl... turned the corner. A cold, winter wind helped numb him as he thought he would die of blood loss but the blood coming

from his cuts on began to freeze, closing his wounds. Finally Parilon was the last kid not on the bus except Jokoch so he boarded it. Everyone crowded around him, laughing at Jokoch as the bus drove away, then he fainted.

When he came to, the bus was rounding the corner in the afternoon to drop off the kids. Everyone on the bus laughed when they saw he was still on the sign. Parilon was the first off and headed straight to him. He grabbed Jokoch's hair and lifted his head up until he was staring up at him, luckily the cold had numbed everything, everyone from the bus crowded around. Jokoch felt like he was a punching bag, hanging there helplessly. Parilon raised his fist ready to hit. Jokoch closed his eyes and got ready for the impact, but it didn't come. The crowd had hushed and he opened an eye.

There, standing right beside Parilon, was a tall figure in a deep purple cloak, one hand on Parilon's arm, holding it back. None of the crowd had seen the figure come up; It seemed that she had just appeared out of nowhere. The crowd shifted in the tense silences.

"Go home, and don't lay another finger on this boy." hissed the figure loud enough for all to hear.

The figure let go of Parilon's arm and stood there until they had all gone, everyone could feel the figure's ice cold glare even though they couldn't see the person's eyes or if it was pointed at them. After they had all left the figure walked over to Jokoch and gently lifted him down into some clean snow. To his surprise, his wounds and the cold quickly disappeared. he wasn't even left with any soreness. She turned and picked up his clothes. As she picked them up the dirt, wetness, holes, tears, and rips vanished. The figure handed his stuff back to him and he quickly pulled them on.

Jokoch was just about to thank her, but when he looked back at her, she was gone. He looked around, but there wasn't even a sign that she had even existed. Unsure of what just happened, he walked back to Yarcil Orphanage.

The three weeks that had passed by slowly and had caused him to completely forget the

incident. He lay in bed and heard the workers bustling below. He groaned, realizing he was late for school and that he would have to walk the two miles to school. He quickly got up and dressed. He tiptoed past the kitchen and down the street and tried to remember the route the bus took.

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He reached the bus stop and continued forward, focusing his mind on the bus route. He turned a corner and walked along the edge of the forest, his body burning with pain. He stopped by a rock and sat down, struggling to breath from exhaustion. Suddenly, he had the eerie feeling that someone was watching him. He looked around too see a deer staring at him cautiously in the woods. It suddenly sprang away, but the feeling didn't leave.

Shrugging it off, he got up and kept walking, turning on a road leading into the woods. The trees blocked out most of the light and the few that had a slight greenish tint to them. The woods were creepy and dark and a little too far to see the other end at this part. Several animals lived in these woods and mountains, Jokoch knew, and several were dangerous, including the cougar, so he was very cautious, jumping at every noise.

He caught a glimpse of tan out of the corner of his eye and carefully turned to look. There, laying on a rock deeper in the woods, a cougar stared back, it's tail slowly swishing and its gleaming yellow eyes felt like they were piercing deep into his soul. He turned and ran the rest of the way out of the woods. Once out, he turned around to make sure the cougar had not followed him, which it hadn't. With a sigh of relief, he continued on to school, getting there just in time for his last class.

Finally, school ended and he boarded the bus home. He stared out the window as they drove through the forest. The cougar hadn't moved and it stared at him as they drove past it. It creeped him out. At the bus stop, he was the last one to get off and everyone was waiting for him. He tried to run, but they caught him and dragged him back to the center of the circle. Parilon stood waiting for him, knife drawn, which was still stained with his blood. Jokoch gulped as he stood there, hands held behind his back in a painful position. Parilon smiled evilly down at him.

"You sluffed your beating today!" he teased.

Everyone laughed at his joke. The others held Jokoch still as he stabbed him in the stomach. His eyes glazed over and his legs went limp but the knife was too short to kill and the kids behind

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started to throw snowballs at him that had chunks of ice and rocks in it that cut and bruised him even more. He could barely see out of his fogging eyes as they continued to lash out at him.

That's when he died and went to heaven. He was very bored as he sat there eating pancakes. He strangely wasn't getting away from the pain so he went back to Earth, though he weirdly missed the pancakes.

"moo," said the fairy cow as he left.

Parilon's mother drove up and shouted at Parilon "Get in or you'll miss your game!" Parillon ran and jumped into the car and drove off. Without Parilon's creativity everyone else eventually got bored and went home. After Jokoch recuperated a little, he finally managed to get up and limp back to the orphanage.

He got inside and started heading for his room when he heard the door open. Curious because he was still the only orphan at the orphanage, he turned around and saw a figure in a deep purple cloak walk up to the front desk. He had completely forgotten about the figure, so he did not recognize the stranger. She talked to the lady behind the desk and signed some papers. The lady had a giant smile.

They walked towards him and the lady said "You're getting adopted! Now go get your things and come back down!"

Jokoch couldn't believe his ears. He ran to his room and packed his few things, leaving nothing behind. He ran back, wondering who the figure was and why they were adopting him that he didn't notice Malcil standing there. He grabbed Jokoch right before he crashed into him, who dropped all his stuff in his fright as he lifted him up. Malcil was a tall man so Jokoch was too scared to get away, for the thought of falling five feet onto hard floor. He could smell the alcohol wafting from him and he knew he was in trouble.

Suddenly, he heard an authoritative voice say "Drop him." Jokoch took his gaze off Malcil and looked over his shoulder and saw the cloaked figure calmly standing there, a bow trained right at Malcil's head. Malcil only had to glance and he laughed. Jokoch was still looking and didn't notice until too late when Malcil punched him in the head, and everything went black.

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A woman in a purple cloak appears at the orphanage.

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